

REMARKS

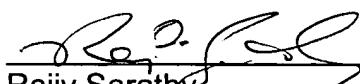
Claims 1-129 were pending in the application at the time the present Office Action was mailed. Claims 2-6, 8-9, 13, 17-20, 22, 24-33, 41, 43, 45, 49, 72, 74-76, 84-85, 96, and 98-100 are amended in this response. Claims 1, 56-71, 77-83, 88-95, and 101-129 are cancelled in this response. Claim 130 is added in this response. Accordingly, claims 2-55, 72-76, 84-87, 96-100, and 130 are pending.

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 3-40, 43, 44, 46-48, 56-71, 74-83, 85-95 and 101-129 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,055,692 ("Alexander") in view of "admitted prior art," and in further view of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,903,730, 5,333,280, 5,774,728, and 5,812,811, in various combinations. The Office Action objected to claims 2, 41-42, 45, 49-55, 72-73, 84, and 96-100, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten. Claims 2-6, 8-9, 13, 17-20, 22, 24-33, 41, 43, 45, 49, 72, 74-76, 84-85, 96, and 98-100 have been amended either to appear in independent form or as dependent from these. Accordingly, the applicants submit that these claims are immediately allowable. Claims 1, 56-71, 77-83, 88-95, and 101-129 have been cancelled without conceding the merits of the Examiner's rejections.

In view of the foregoing, the claims pending in the application comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and patentably define over the applied art. A Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-6478.

Respectfully submitted,
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